A

VISITATION

OF LOVE

To the tender Plants of Gods

VINEYARD

Given forth by HENRY JACKSON.

Alſo two Generall Epiſtles given forth by

WILLIAM CATON.

LONDON.

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A visitation of LOVE *unto the tender plants of Gods Vineyard.*

DEar and tender plants of my heavenly Father, the salutation of my love dearly doth greet you all, in the spirit that giveth life, by which you are brought afresh to my remembrance, even at this present time, (in these my present bonds, for the word of God, and the testimony of Christ Jesus:) and that not without living breathings arising in my heart unto the Lord for you, that the God of all life, vertue, and living refreshment may daily water and nourish you with his heavenly life, love, and vertue, causing you to abound in all the fruits of righteousnesse, to the everlasting praise of his great and glorious Name; that so you being fully rooted, fixed, and established, in the root of life (*the Stem and off-spring of David*) may grow up as plants of righteousnes, and flourish as Willows by the water courses, that your branches may never wither, nor your fruit perish: but that the vertue of your leaf may be for the healing of the Nations, and your fruit may remain, (in the winter stormes and tempests,) to the everlasting praise and glory of the Lord God of the vine-yard, who hath planted and watered you, and who also hath and will give an encrease unto all you, who exalt not above the root, nor lift up your selves against the other branches, but abides in the true vine, and keeps your place in the ground and root of life, into which the Father hath implanted and grafted you, that ye never may be plucked up, nor cut off as withered and unfruitfull branches, but that the vertue of the root of life, may put forth it self through you, and in the vertue and life thereof you may grow up, fructifie, and abound in all the fruits of righteousnes, thankesgiving and praise, to the everlasting glory and renown of the Lord of the vineyard, who is God over all, blessed for evermore.

And dear and tender plants, this is with me further to signifie unto you that it was purposed in my heart to have visited you, in the bowels of eternall love, (with my dear and honorable Brother and companion in the Lord *W. D.*) But Sathan hath hindred us, who in Ages and Generations past, sought to withstand the servants of the most high God, and even now also worketh mightily in the hearts of unreasonable and wicked men, seeking to stirre up wrath against us, and to cast our bodies into prison, thereby intending to let and hinder the work of the Lord, and to stop the

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wells of *Jacob*, by depriving the heritage of the Lord, of those pretious and refreshing oportunities, which our God hath afforded us, in our holy assemblings and comings together to wait upon him, to be strengthned and refreshed by him, and to build up, strengthen and comfort one another, in the most holy faith, even with the same strength, vertue, and consolation, wherewith we our selves are strengthned, comforted and refreshed of our God. And glory be to the Lord God for ever, concerning this I am fully assured, that the expectation of the wicked one herein shall be frustrated, and that the God of all comfort and consolation hath and doth answer the request of our soules concerning you, who abide faithfull to him, in the light of his everlasting covenant, in that he will manifest his heavenly vertue with you, whether together or assunder as outwardly, and open the spring of eternall life in you: and therein make you as a well-spring of living refreshment one unto another. And though he hath permitted the adversary so far to prevaile against us, or to exercise his rage on us, as to cast our bodies into prison, (as he did the very dearest Saints and servants of the God of Heaven in the dayes past: yet herein also I am fully confident, that the wrath of men shall be turned to the praise of our God, and the remainder thereof he will restrain, and so concerning this I am fully satisfied, and rest in peace in the (will or rather) permission of our God, believeing assuredly that this also shall work for our consolation, that the depth of the riches of Gods love unto us ward may more abundantly be made manifest, both in the preservation and deliverance of us, in his own appointed time, untill which we rest in the will of our God, (being singly given up, that, that may be done by us, and fulfilled in us.) In which rest yee with us my dear friends, for though in bodily presence, we are seperated from you, and letted from visiting of you, (for a little season) yet in spirit we are with you, & in the bowels of eternal love, our hearts are enlarged towards you, much more then what is needfull to be expressed in lines of this kind, seeing in the word of the Lord God you may read us and feel us near unto you, and with you all, even as in an epistle written in your harts to be seen and read by you all.

Wherefore in that recieve ye a visitation of tender love from him that travels in spirit, (although outwardly in bonds) for your preservation, growth, and prosperity every way in Gods pretious truth, by which you were at first convinced, for there is not preservatian, growth, nor any true prosperity in or by another, then in that which hath been declared of unto you, from the beginning, even the light of Christ Jesus, the word of

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the gospel of truth, by which at first your hearts were opened and turned towards the Lord, and repentance given unto life never to be repented of, and faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ, and fervent love begotten in your hearts one towards another, by which word of the Gospel my heart is enlarged unto you, in an abundant manner, and therein also let me inlarge my self a little, by writing a few lines unto you in simplicity and truth, though you need it not, who are taught by the anoynting that dwelleth in you, in all things, and your hearts established in righteousnesse, yet seeing all are not come so farre, that are convinced of the truth of God, bear with me a little ye that are strong, if I write a few words in generall by way of caution, or to put you afresh in remembrance.

O you dear and tender plants of my Father, that ye be watchful at all times, and take heed of that which would exalt you above your root, or draw you into highnesse and loftinesse of minde, above the feeling of the daily crosse, kept over and above the earthly or fleshly part, for that is to be beat down, and kept in subjection, or else it will cause you to wither and dry up at the root, if that be nourished and cherished in you, which the Lord God hates and resisteth: but he giveth grace to the humble, wherefore, my dear friends in lowlinesse of heart and minde, walk ye in the daily crosse unto that part and nature, which would crucifie the Son of God afresh, and cause you to build again those things, which you once destroyed, by getting up into a fleshly liberty and exaltation, which is not the liberty of the Sons of God [who have dominion over that part, which would cause the offence of the crosse to cease,] for such as give way unto that, though they have begun in the Spirit, yet will end in the flesh: and though they once might partake of the virtue of the root of life, yet afterwards degenerate from it, and bring not forth fruit unto God, but both branch and fruit perishes: so against that, friendes, all are to watch, which would lead out into fleshly liberty, or into any exaltation of flesh or spirit, [above the daily crosse of Christ] how glorious soever it may appear to the outward eye, yet a snare of death there is in it, and the vertue of the pretious life will withdraw it self from such as follow it, & though they may flourish as a green bay-tree [in the profession of truth] yet the vertue of the root of life having withdrawn it self, their leaf will shortly wither, and they become as corne that groweth on the house top, that brings not forth fruit to perfection.

And therefore my dear friends, the word of exhortatation, which ariseth in my heart unto you all is, dwell low in the fear of the Lord God, and in

humility of heart walk with him, in the measure of that grace ye have received of him, for that is safe for you all, and to him that hath shall be given, that he may have in abundance, but unto him that hath not profitted, in that which he hath, even that which he hath shall be taken from him. Watch you therefore my dear friends, that a daily profiting you may know, in that tallent which is committed unto you, for there is no profiting in or by another, nor by what another hath received of it: but by abideing in that which ye have received of God in your own particulars: that you may feel that grow and increase in you, and you in it untill it have wholy leavened you into its own proper vertue and nature; and thereby an entrance is and will be administred unto you more and more into that which is eternal, even into the kingdome and life of our Lord Jesus Christ: and you will feel an habitation in that, and and a sitting down in it, which indeed is exceeding precious, and will countervaile all your sufferings, labours, and travels for it. And that you will feel raised up in you, which serves God as naturally, and does his will, unto which his commands are not grevious, but joyous, nor is his yoke burthensome, but this brings forth fruit naturally unto God: for indeed it is of him and from him, and not of this world, but born from above, and seeks those things that are eternal, and to be unto God in deed, in truth, and in righteousnesse, and though this brings forth the workes of God outwardly before men, and stands singly given up in body soul and spirit to serve him in all things; and to do his will, that therein the Father may be glorified, yet it doth not seek to appear before men, nor to be approved by men in any thing, but to answer the Lord in all things: and to stand approved in his sight, and unto his witnesse in every conscience, and this is the son of God for ever, and heir of the Kingdome, and a plant of the right hand of the God of Heaven, which naturally bringeth forth fruit to the praise of the Lord of the vineyard, who hath planted and watered it. And so dear friends feel this in you, all raised up, begotten and brought forth, for this will the Lord God cherish, [as a Father his onely begotten:] and this shall receive the rain in due season, even the former and latter rain, the dew of Heaven, and the fatnesse of the good ground shall daily water and nourish this in the root, and in the branch: and though the briars and thorns may seek to smother this, yet the fire of the Lord shall consume them, and every plant that the Father hath not planted, which seeks to hinder the growth of this, the axe of the Lord shall cut them up: so that the leaves of this shall never wither, nor its blossomes perish; the scorching

ing heat in the Summer, nor the ſtormy blaſts in the Winter, ſhall have no power over it, becauſe it is rooted in an eternal ground of life, and watered with the dew of of Heaven which cauſeth it to flouriſh and bloſſome in due ſeaſon, and bring forth fruit to perfection, to the everlaſting glory and renown of the Lord of the Vineyard, over all who is bleſſed for evermore.

And ſo dear Plants of my heavenly Father, recieve ye my words in the word of life from whence they were written, and therein alſo may you read, feel, and receive the thing I teſtifie of, and exhort unto, even the engrafted word which is able to ſave your ſouls, that by it you may have power over that whether in your ſelves or in others, which would draw you from the root of life, [or word engrafted] in your own particulars, for that is your enemy, and to be watched and warred againſt, (which would draw you from that) in whatever appearance it may come unto you in, that as an Angel of light to draw you from the light of life revealed in you, or from the preſent ſenſible feeling of your own particular eſtate and conditions in it, into ſomething before or behind, which may ſeem glorious unto the eye that is abroad, ſaying, *Lo here, or there, is the Kingdome of God*, in this, or that, or the other obſervation, and thereby ſeek to raiſe up a covetting or longing deſire, to be in another ſtate or condition, in a higher or more glorious ſtate or diſpenſation, then what you are grown into, by the light of life, the manifeſtation of Gods ſpirit, which is given unto you to profit withall; but I ſay unto you goe not forth, but abide with the Lord in that which ye have received of him, that by it a growth and enterance may be adminiſtred unto you, into the Kingdome in deed, and in truth; for the Kingdome of God comes not by obſervation of this, or that, or the other thing, nor yet ſtands it in high words, or guilded and coyned expreſſions, but in judgement and mercy, in peace, in truth, and in righteouſneſſe, and happy are they that enter it through judgement and righteouſneſſe, and ſit down in it, in the peace that endures for ever, and goes no more forth to the right hand, nor to the left, for the things that are behind alſo, may the enemy tempt you withal, to draw back your minds from the Lord, into the glory of *Egypt*, the thing which you have once turned your backs upon, even the fading enjoyments of this preſent life, ſaying, *All this will I give thee, if thou will fall down and worſhip me*; then ſafe will ſuch be as dwell in the dayly croſſe, whereby the world is Crucified unto them, and they unto the world, that ſo the wicked one may have no part in them, becauſe they

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are passed from death unto life, feeding of, and being cloathed with that which is immortal, and never perishes, their life standing in an eternal root, who have the Lord for their portion, such cannot with *Esau* sell their birth-right for a messe of Pottage; nor with *Demas* chuse this present world, and forsake the way of truth, for in them the temptation of the enemy hath no place, they living in that immortal & eternal principle of life, which first convinced them of the evil of the world, and the spirit of wickedness in high places, that accursed root which brings not forth fruit into God, in which they were once branches, but are now broken off, that they might be ingrafted, and for ever abide in another, but whoever return into the old root and nature again, will become as withered branches twice dead plucked up by the roots.

You therefore, my dear friends, that know a cutting off from the old root, and a grafting again into the true Vine the light of life, and word of the Lord God, by which your hearts are in measure cleansed, sanctified and purified from the pollutions of the world, abide ye in that word for ever, and goe not forth to look for, or covet after another dispensation of life or glory, nor seek not another Kingdome besides that which is revealed in the light, which as ye abide in it, an entrance will be administred into it from day to day, and a growth into that state and condition, which the high and lofty spirits, which have left their habitations, and are exalted above the root of life in themselves fall short of, though they may have great swelling words, of those things which they have not witnessed, tasted nor handled of, being vainly puft up in their fleshly minds, and boast of things above their line, or of the estate whereunto they have not attained.

But this I say unto you, my dear friends, goe not forth unto any of these exalted spirits, in any of these glorious temptations, which promiseth great things, but there is a lye in (that which may seem to be) their right hand, and therefore goe not forth, but abide with the Lord for ever, in the measure of his eternal truth which changeth not, (though many may turn from it,) nor waxeth not old, but abideth the same for ever, for there is your safety. And as you abide in this, and stand singly girt up in it, here no deceitful spirits can come nor enter, but they will be seen and judged, whether they come from within, or from without, and whatever their covering or appearance may be, yet being out of the vertue and savour of life their root and ground will be seen, discovered, and judged, and so kept clean, pure, and holy in the eternal light and life of God, in which ye live walk and will have dominion over all unclean and fallen spirit, who

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are gone from their first principle, and erred from the light of life, which was sown in them.

And so you dear and tender plants of my heavenly Father, abide ye in the true Vine the light of life, which the Father hath sown in you, that for ever ye may be rooted, fixed, and established in it, and bring forth fruit to perfection, that the root of bitternesse, and every plant which your heavenly Father hath not planted, may wholly be cut up and rooted out, by the two-edged Sword, the Axe of the Lord God, that so the plant of righteousnesse may take root, and grow up in you, wholly to cover the earth, as the waters covers the Sea, that as you have born the Image of the earthly; so now you may bear the Image of the heavenly, and may become a praise unto the Lord in your generation, & a comfort, strengthening, and refreshing one unto another, serving the Lord with a pure heart fervently, and one another in love, which is the end of all ministrations, and the summe of the desire of our hearts concerning you, and that for which our souls travels, that the love of God may abound in you; and the God of love, peace, and mercy be with you, and establish your hearts, in the everlasting Covenant of his light, life, and Salvation, that in it ye may stand for ever, and bear a living testimony for him and his truth upon earth. And that so it may be with you all, is the fervent Supplication of my soul in the spirit that giveth life, by which the endeared visitation, and salutation of my love (first and last) reacheth to you all. *Farewell.*

From a Branch of Righteousnesse sprung forth of the Root of David, *known unto you, in the eternal ground and root of life, and amongst men by the name of*

HENRY JACKSON.

The first Copy of this was written in *Warwick* Goale in the latter end of the 10. Moneth, 1663. Where I am a Prisoner for the testimony of Christ Jesus with my dear Brother before mentioned and many more of our dear friends in the truth.

For the dear Plants of God in the Southern Counties, Essex, Suffolk, Norfolk, Kent, *or elsewhere, &c. to be dispersed and sent amongst them as freedome and opertunity is.*

Yarmouth common Gaol the fourth day of the eight moneth. 1663.

MY dearly beloved Friends, who are ſenſible of the breathings of life in your ſelves, and of the power of the everlaſting Goſpel of peace, my unfeigned brotherly love flowes, forth unto you, from the immortall life, which the God of my life, hath manifeſted in my mortal body, and with the ſalutation of this my reall love do I greet you all, whom God hath called and choſen in theſe perillous times: to be a peculiar people unto himſelf, to ſhew forth his praiſe, and not your own, to declare his wonderous works, and not your own, to get honour and renown unto him in the earth, and not unto your ſelves: for he hath bought you with a price, therefore are you not your own, and he hath redeemed you from the corruptible, by that which is incorruptible, and therefore how ſhould you continue in that which is corruptible to the ſatisfying your wills, and the wills of corruptible men, who are in the corruptible, and in their unconverted eſtate, fulfiling their own wills: ſhewing forth their own praiſe, declaring their own workes, admireing and worſhiping of them, and getting honour and renown unto themſelves in the earth, honouring, regarding and ſerving the Creatures more then the Creator, even as we in the times of ignorance have done before the redemption [before mentioned was witneſſed] or the election known, which now many are made witneſſes of, glory be unto the moſt high for evermore.

Wherefore Friends, anſwer ye the Lords end in calling of you, and his end in purchaſing of you, and his end in redeeming of you, which may be anſwered by your faithfulneſſe unto the Lord, and in ſo doing every one will have his reward with him, for every one that anſwers the Lords end, for which the Lord called him: comes to enjoy his preſence, comes to be filled with love, life, joy and peace, and ſuch do really ſhew forth his praiſe, and declare his wonderous works to the bringing of honour and renown unto him, and not unto themſelves: but they that are unfaithfull and diſobedient, though called, they do not anſwer the end, for which they were called, and therefore doth not the Lord ſo reward them, through his dwelling with them, through filling them with love, life, joy, and peace, as

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he rewards the other that are faithfull, but on the contrary they who are called and are not faithful, as to answer the end for which they are called; they, (I say) are filled with sorrow, and unbeleif, with trouble, and anguish, and condemnation pursues them, from that which called them, which they being unfaithful unto, it ministers not consolation but condemnation, it speaks not peace but warre, &c.

And this being alwaies present with them to put them in mind of their neglect, of their unfaithfulnesse, of their disobedience, and of their unworthinesse, they are alwayes disquieted and tolticated in themselves, and in such, the murmurer and unbeliever hath place, and such are very unfitting to bear crosses, tryals and sufferings, for all these will adde to the trouble, which they were before possessed withall, so that very many inconveniences do ensue, where the end for which God called a people is not answered by them that are called; therefore, my dearly beloved friends, be mindeful not onely of the end, for which you are called, but of answering the same, that the Lords delight may be to do good unto you; who are his peculiar treasure, and live all in his eternall power and spirit, that you may know the Lord and his eternall truth to be on your sides, when furious men rise up against you, then need you not be afraid, of what they can do unto you, for hath not the Lord oftentimes already suffered many of you to be tried, through the fury of the wicked, which at sundry times hath been high against you, but how hath the Lord turned it backward, and how hath he restrained the wickednesse of the wicked by his mighty power from being executed upou you: even to your own admiration, and hath not the Lords end in this been to engage you through his infinite mercy, so much the more unto him, who oftentimes suffered the fury of the ungodly to break forth a little, yet not for the destroying, but for the trying his people, and how near have we found him unto us, even as a rock of defence to fly unto in our greatest straites; difficulties, and temptations, and what free accesse have we had unto him, through his eternal spirit in our selves, when by Jayles, houses of correction, force of Armes and the like, we have been hindred from having accesse one unto another, or for meeting together in the outward, yet by those things before mentioned, we could not be hindred from meeting together in the Lord, I mean in the eternal spirit, when the fury of the wicked hath been as the rageing of the Sea, and having then the testimony of the Lords eternal Spirit in our selves, that we had answered the Lords end in his calling of us, in that we had faithfully shewn forth his praise, and brought honour

and renown unto his Name upon earth, Oh! what joy and peace, that, did bring unto ourſoules, and how did we rejoyce in the Lord when he covevered our heads, as in the day of battell, even untill that the fury of the wicked came to be abated ſo oftentimes [you know] have we ſeen the eminent hand of our God ſtretched out for our deliverance, which hath hitherto preſerved us to our great admiration, therefore, let us who have had ſuch experience of the faithfulneſſe of our God endeavour to be like unto him, even faithfull as he is faithfull.

And now forasmuch as that in theſe perillous times, we cannot well ſerve our God in that way, in which he required us to walk, without being in jeopardy of bonds and impriſonments: or to have other ſufferings impoſed upon us, by reaſon of our meeting togerher to wait upon the Lord, and it doth therefore ſo much the more concern us to feel the drawings of our God by his eternal Spirit to our meetings; that when we are met we may ſo much the more enjoy his preſence in our meetings, to the refreſhment of our ſoules, and then if we ſuffer for waiting upon him, he will not leave us comfortleſſe in that ſuffering, which for that cauſe comes upon us: [and this is the word of trueth unto you] neither will it be grievous to us, while we keep in that through which we enjoyed him in our meeting, for in that may we enjoy him in our ſufferings: and then it will be better to be one day in a priſon with the Lord, then a thouſand elſe where, without the enjoyment of his preſence, in which we have found, (as you know) much joy and peace, much comfort and conſolation, and therefore have we cauſe to hazard our liberty, through our keeping of our meeting, though we be accounted by men offenders for ſo doing, rather then through the neglecting of them, we ſhould become offenders in the light of the Lord, through whoſe mercy we are come to know the benefit of them, to the end we might priſe and frequent them, and not ſlight nor neglect them, for it is certain if we neglect them, we ſhall not reap any benefit by them, but if we frequent them, according to the manner of the faithfull, then will the Lord be with us at them: and amongſt us in them, and then his end in bringing of us into the practiſe of ſuch meetings, will be anſwered to his glory and our comforts.

Again as concerning ſwearing, what was the Lords end in giving us to ſee the evil of this? was it not that we ſhould keep clear of it, and bear our faithful teſtimony againſt it, as againſt a hurtful evil, which is direct contrary to the doctrine of Chriſt, and ſeeing we have known the terrours of the Lord God againſt this evil, and have therefore perſwaded others from

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it, how can we therefore in any wise consent unto it, as to do it, though we should therefore lose both our liberties and estates, for surely the Lord hath an end in convincing us of it, & in shewing us the evil of it, and if we keep clear of it, and bear a faithful testimony against it unto the end, then the Lords end in convincing us of the evil of it, will be--- Answered; who knew before what would come upon us, by reason of our testimony against it. And if God had not suffered this as a snare in the hand of our enemies, there would have been something else, (as there are besides things many) which they take up as occasions against us, as covers for their wickedness, and these things are not without the Lords permission, who will try his Jewels as Gold that is seven times purified, and the more that we keep our Consciences void of offence towards him and man, the more precious we shall be in his sight, but if we should love our Liberties, our Estates or Lives more then him who hath said, *Swear not at all*, and for the saving of these should swear, contrary to his command, we should not onely neglect answering his end in forbidding of it, but incurre his displeasure against us, and while through doing that which he forbids, we may think to save our Liberties, estates, and lives, we might even in a moment loose them all, for we know they are uncertain, therefore let us answer the Lords end in shewing us the evil of this also, and in being faithful in this, and in all other things, we shall find life, riches, and liberties, which the world can neither give us, nor take from us. Moreover Friends, as concerning your Return again to the Steeple-houses, and unto which some would force you at this day, but alas, shall not he that sitteth in the Heavens laugh at their folly? for doth not the least amongst you know that was not the Lords end in bringing you out of them; (I mean, that you should return to them again) neither needed you have suffered upon this account by that generation that continues in them, if God had not determined to have tryed you out of them, and that by the suffering which comes, and will come upon you, for not repairing to them; yet nevertheless if you would rather answer the Adversaries will by your returning to them again, then the Lords end in calling you out of them, then you might suddenly free your selves from suffering upon this account; but I doubt not but you are otherwise minded, yea, resolved to answer the Lords end in his calling you out of them, notwithstanding your Adversaries present threatnings, forcing and compellings, which is not of, from, by, nor through the Spirit of the Lord God, & therefore in the Spirit with patience must you bear what the Lord suffers to come upon you upon this

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count, for I testifie unto you it is not for the destroying of any, though it may tend to the proving of many.

Wherefore my dear friends, let none be discouraged nor terrified at what the Lord suffers to come upon you, by reason of your meetings, by reason of your not swearing, by reason of your not going to their publick worship, or by reason of any other particular thing, as in relation to the truth of our God; for while suffering comes upon you onely by reason of the truth, you need not be ashamed of it, neither will the Lord leave you comfortlesse in it, for he is ready to succour such as for conscience sake suffer by reason of these things, even as thousands, (who have found it by experience) can testifie.

In the mean time comfort ye one another in the bowels of love, and be ye tender affectionated one to another, and regard not the present threatnings of men, nor look not at the present tribulations, but regard the truth in your selves; and look unto the Lord, and hear what he saith, and if he speak peace, be not ye troubled, though men speak and prepare war against you, but hold ye alwaies fast the word of Gods power and patience, which is able to preserve and keep you in all your sufferings and tribulations, even unto the day of salvation, and unto this do I commit you all (my dearly beloved friends) as unto that which is able to save you all to the utmost, so the peace and blessing of the Almighty be with, upon, and among you all, for evermore.

I suppose many of you have heard of my bonds, how that after God of his mercy had delivered me out of a mighty violent storm at Sea, I was cast in here, where they in Authority have shewed themselves to be worse to me, and the friends with me, then the Barbarious people of *Melita* was to *Paul*, and them that were with him; who shewed them no small kindnesse, for they received and lodged them courteously; but these that are called Christians shewed themselves to be barbarous rather then courteous, in that they broke up our Meeting with many Souldiers, and afterwards committed us to prison, and in stead of shewing us much kindnesse, they have been so cruell to us, as that sometime it was difficult for us to get water and bread, and so were farre from courteously entertaining of us, or with honouring of us with many honours, as the *Barbarians* did them before mentioned; howbeit, the Lord is with us, and their cruelty hath been little to us, for we know that our God will in his own due time deliver us out of their hands, when our testimony is sufficiently born amongst them, but of this I am very sensible, that with the baptisme

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Remember thy Creator in the day of thy youth

of ſuffering under this ſpirit of perſecution in the Nation, many are to be baptized into the fellowſhip of the Goſpell with the Saints in light, and bleſſed and thrice happy are they, and will they be, that continue faithfull unto the end, for they ſhall be ſaved. Farewell in the Lord, in whom I remain,

Your dear friend and Brother

My fellow Priſoners ſalutes you all.

WILLIAM CATON.

This for **F**riends to be read in their Meetings.

Yarmouth

XUM

Yarmouth *the* 14. *of the* 11. *Moneth*, 1663.

DEar Friends, Brethren and Sisters, (who are called to follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth) my very soul greeteth you all with the salutation of my unfeigned and entire love in and through the eternal spirit which the God of our strength and comfort hath sent into our hearts, through which I am made to share with you, not only of your sufferings, which you meet with-all through your following of the Lamb) but also of your consolation which you find in the midst of your suffering: and truly my heart rejoyceth in this fellowship with you, and my soul claims a part with you of all your sufferings and consolations which you meet withall in this your return to *Zion*; and my heart is affected with the dealings of the Lord with you, and with his infinite love and mercy unto you, and often doth my spirit intercede unto him with strong sighes and groans, (which cannot easily be uttered) on your behalf, whom he loveth, though the world hate you, whom he hath respect unto, though the world despise you, whom he careth for though the world trample upon you, whom he hath brought into fellowship with himself, and with his Saints in light, though the world excommunicate you, wherefore then should any of you be afraid of their threatnings, or regard their excommunications, which in my heart I have considered of, and pondred upon.

And this I have seen in the light of the Lord, that they that cannot bring people from under the power of Satan, they cannot give up them unto Satan, who through the power of God are brought (as you are) from under Satans power. 2ly. I have seen that the curses of them that pretend to excommunicate you, are but like the curses of *Shemi*, that cursed *David*; or the curses of of prophane Publicans, who when they are troubled at you will curse you for the good counsel you give them, when you exhort them to the fear the Lord, and to forsake the evil of their waies. 3ly. I cannot see that they can excommunicate you out of that which many of you never were in, (I mean, their Church, or its fellowship) but suppose you had been in it, what evil can they lay to your charge, by reason of which they should deliver you unto Satan; of which they not being able to convince you, ought not therefore (according to that which they professe to be their Rule) excommunicate any of you. 4ly. They should first make proofe of their Ministry, through bringing people thereby from under Satans power,

and

and by bringing you first into fellowship, before they had gone about to have excommunicated you out of that, which many of you never have been in. And though at first they may pretend love unto your souls, but how do they manifest it, seeing when you refuse to come at their call, they presently (after their manner) will deliver you over unto Satan, is this their love? let the wise in heart judge.

But methinks I have seen them, as men in an old decayed ruined ship at sea, that was ready to perish, who cryed to some that were in a safe harbour to come to their ship for safety, and pretended much love unto them, but they in the harbour being wise, would not come into their rotten ship for many good reasons, whereupon they in the ship grew angry, and pretending to force them into the ship, but did presently throw them into the sea, before ever they got them into the ship; thus their treachery appeared, who pretended love, but were filled with envie. Is it not thus with them that goe about to draw you from your safe harbour, (at which many of you through mercy are arrived) who while they pretend they would force you out of love to your souls into their Church fellowship, do in their haste before they get you so farre, deliver you (so much as in them lyeth) unto Satan: oh! who would therefore put confidence in such men, for surely they are of them who rather seeks yours then you, and had rather share your Estates then have your society; therefore, well said the Apostle, *Turn away from such*; and in the same spirit (according to my measure) say I, *Turn not again unto such, least while you turn unto them, you turn from following the Lamb, and come then through the Lambs power to be excommunicated out of the fellowship with the Saints in light, and come thereby to be delivered unto Satan, which God forbid.*

And Friends, however of this I am assured, and can assure you, that by all their power, whether Ecclesiastical or Civil, they shall not be able to excommunicate you, out of that Church which is in God, nor out of the fellowship of the Saints in light; neither shall they by their power whether Ecclesiastical or Civil, deprive you of your peace and comfort in the Lord, while you abide faithful. Let this therefore be your comfort in the height of your sufferings, when they cast you out of their Synagogues, and say, *Let the Lord be glorified*; and when they spoil your goods, and cast your bodies into prison, and say they will make you examples, that others may fear; oh be not ye troubled at any of these things, for the Lamb whom ye follow will not leave you comfortlesse, for if you be in prison he will be with you, if you suffer hunger he will feed you, if you suffer the

ſpoiling of your goods for the teſtimony of his eternal truth, he is heir of all things, and he hath all power in his hand, who cloatheth the Lyllies, and feedeth the Ravens, and what will he not provide for you his followers, that make warre in righteouſneſſe through faith under his banner of love? yea, yea, (my beloved friends) he will reward you into your own boſomes, though for the preſent you ſuffer ſuch buffetting and beating, ſuch imprisonment, and ſpoiling of your goods, and ſuch cruel uſage in many reſpects, and he will not ſuffer the rod of the wicked to reſt alwaies upon your lot. Therefore, be of good chear in the midſt of theſe your ſufferings which now you are to follow the Lamb through, who through ſufferings was made perfect, and now ſits at the right hand of his father in the higheſt heavens, where they that now ſuffer upon earth for his names ſake, ſhall reign with him in glory and immortality for ever and ever.

Wherefore, comfort ye one another with theſe things in the midſt of theſe your preſent ſufferings, which are not worthy to be compared to the glory which ſhall be revealed, when the Lamb and ſuch as now follow him through ſuffering ſhall have the victory, with which God of his infinite mercy crown you all (my dear Brethren and Siſters) and bleſſe you all with all ſpiritual bleſſings in heavenly places in the ſon of his love, the Captain of our ſalvation, to whoſe ſafe cuſtodie and protection I commit you all, and remain,

Your dear Brother and Companion in tribulation, and yet in bonds for the teſtimony of Jeſus,

WILLIAM CATON.

Another

Another
EPISTLE,
To Friends.

DEar Brethren and Sifters in the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, I ſalute you in the bowells of tender love; Dear Friends, all keep low in the life, that the living vertue you all may feel to nouriſh the tender Babe of God, and all be tender over the principle of God in your own particulars, and that will lead you to be tender over one another, and all keep in the pure wiſdome of God, and watch one over another with a ſingle eye, and you that are ſtrong bear the weak, and come into oneneſſe, oneneſſe of mind, for there the bleſſing is; ſo dear hearts, I am filled with the ſtreams of Gods eternal love, and my ſtreams of love floweth towards you all: So friends, ſink down into the life and power of God, that you may be preſerved pure and clean, that nothing may ariſe which would break your peace with God, that you may be preſerved in unity with him, and one with another, that pure love may ſpring up one to another, in which love you will be all refreſhed, and be as a watered Garden, feeling the well within, from whence the living ſtreams flowes forth, and this keeps all broken and tender; ſo all that which is hard, rough, untoward, or pieviſh, is kept out; yea, all that which would make a rent, is ſeen, and comprehended, and with the light of Jeſus Chriſt judged, and you by the word of power reconciled unto God, and one to another: and let your meeting be in that, ſo will you all feel the preſence of the living God amongſt you, and there are we knit together in one, and in that am I with you, and near you all, and feel you who are in the life and power of truth, where the preſence of the Lord is felt, where we reign and trample upon all that which would lead from the truth. So dear friends, keep within, and ſtay your minds in the light of Chriſt, that you may grow up in the ſoundneſſe, to be of a ſound mind, not ſoon ſhaken, but ſeek the rock Chriſt to ſtand upon; dwell in that which changeth not, that in the oneneſſe you may be kept,

for the Light of Christ changeth not; so all that which is in the changings is not of Christ, who changeth not: And to that measure of life I commit you all, which at first convinced you, which begot love and tenderneſſe in you towards God and towards one another: Ah friends, in that keep, ſo ſhall you feel peace.

RICHARD SCOCHTHRAY.

Given forth in the time of his Imprisonment at Bridewell, *for Gods unchangeable truth, who since finished his Testimony, who travelling in the service of the Lord, laid down his Earthen Tabernacle, about the year 1661. far from his native Country in the Island* Zant.

The End.